BENGALURU, SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2026 www.Bangaloremirror.com 16 Pages PRICE ₹4

Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

TEMP Max 30 | Min 16 | Humidity 20% Partly sunny Sensex 82,626 | Nifty 25,471 | Gold 1,54,515 | Silver 2,46,003 | Dollar 90.63 | Euro 107.52 | GBP 123.40

NEW NORMAL

Numbers reveal delayed pregnancies, safety concerns, and preferences are driving sharp rise in C-section deliveries nationwide

PAGE 6

MATCH REPORT

What talking heads say ahead of India-Pak clash; Ireland piles up runs against Oman; England beats Scotland; South Africa cruises past NZ

PAGE 9

Study by IISc, Indiana University reveals groundwater around Mandur landfill is highly polluted due to seepage of nitrate compounds from the landfill; high level of nitrate detected in water samples collected post-monsoon

IN SEEP TROUBLE

WHO has sets guideline value of 50 mg/L for nitrate in drinking water to prevent blue baby syndrome

FILE PHOTO

| Garima Prasher
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TWEETS @BangaloreMIRROR

Leachate from the Mandur landfill is contaminating the groundwater in the area. A study conducted by researchers from the Indian Institute of Science and Indiana University in the USA shows that the groundwater around Mandur landfill is highly polluted due to seepage of nitrate compounds from the landfill, raising concerns about potential contamination in other areas due to unsystematic dumping of municipal solid waste.

Researchers analysed 25 water samples and found that 17 contained a high level of nitrate during the post-monsoon season, posing a health risk to the residents.

"The risk of groundwater contamination in solid waste-affected urban settlements of Bengaluru is higher in post monsoon season due to the evaporation process. Evaporation concentrates the leachate further, which is laden with nitrate. Moreover, less rainfall prevents dilution of the concentrate, causing higher values of nitrate in groundwater samples," said Prosenjit Ghosh, one of the researchers and

CONTINUED ON PAGE 2 >>

> **"The risk of groundwater contamination in solid waste-affected urban settlements of Bengaluru is higher post monsoon due to the evaporation process. Evaporation concentrates the leachate further, which is laden with nitrate**
>
> — Prosenjit Ghosh, one of the researchers

Stop the racket

Traffic police up the amp against unnecessary honking as volunteers raise alarm over physical consequences of noise pollution

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Volunteers' efforts to raise awareness about noise pollution caused by honking have paid off. The Bengaluru Traffic Police (BTP) has launched a powerful awareness campaign to combat the rampant honking culture, highlighting that "one horn, one second" can put "one life at risk".

The traffic police illustrate how excessive noise overstimulates sensory hair cells in the ear — delicate structures that do not grow back once damaged. This constant auditory abuse leads to severe physical consequences, including permanent hearing damage, chronic headaches, and a loss of focus for everyone on the road.

Volunteers from Citizens 4 Change (C4C) and Noise Watchers met the Bengaluru Traffic Police Joint Commissioner Karthik Reddy and requested awareness and enforcement measures, following which BTP released a video.

Noise Watchers, headed by Prajna Dutta, in their letter, requested the

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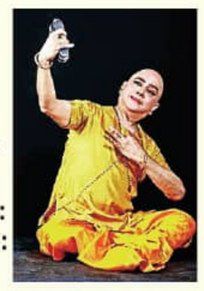
THINGS TO DO

01 Guru tribute



Chandraguru School of Dance will present Kritajnata 2026. The festival features senior male Gurus performing Kuchipudi, Kathak, Bharatanatyam and Odissi. **Where: Seva Sadan, Malleshwaram; When: February 19, 5.30 pm**

02 Flavour lab

The Good Craft Co.'s Flavour Lab in Whitefield hosts immersive February sessions exploring Indian craft spirits and fermentation. Highlights include The Indian Whisky Story and a World Kombucha Day special with Mossant, featuring guided tastings and behind-the-scenes insights. **Where: TGCC Flavour Lab, Whitefield; When: February 14 & 21, 4 to 6.30 pm**

03 Art showcase

Mumbai-based Todywalla Auctions will present a preview of its forthcoming antiquities sale. The exhibition features miniature paintings, stone and bronze sculptures, Indian silver, jewellery and textiles spanning centuries of artistic heritage. **Where: Bangalore International Centre, Domlur; When: February 13 to 15**

04 Love archive

Throughout February, Urban Solace invites guests to complete the sentence "Love is…" on hand-cut paper hearts as part of its 15th annual Wall of Love initiative. What began as a simple gesture has evolved into a growing archive of handwritten reflections, capturing the city's varied expressions of affection, memory and meaning. **Where: Urban Solace – Café for the Soul, Annaswamy Mudaliar Road; When: Until Feb 28, 11 am to 11 pm**

05 Flavour lab

The Good Craft Co.'s Flavour Lab in Whitefield hosts immersive February sessions exploring Indian craft spirits and fermentation. Highlights include The Indian Whisky Story and a World Kombucha Day special with Mossant, featuring guided tastings and behind-the-scenes insights. **Where: TGCC Flavour Lab, Whitefield; When: February 14 & 21, 4 to 6.30 pm**

Principals in a degree of trouble

Principals saddled with credential scrutiny, as allegations surface over questionable doctoral qualifications from outside institutions

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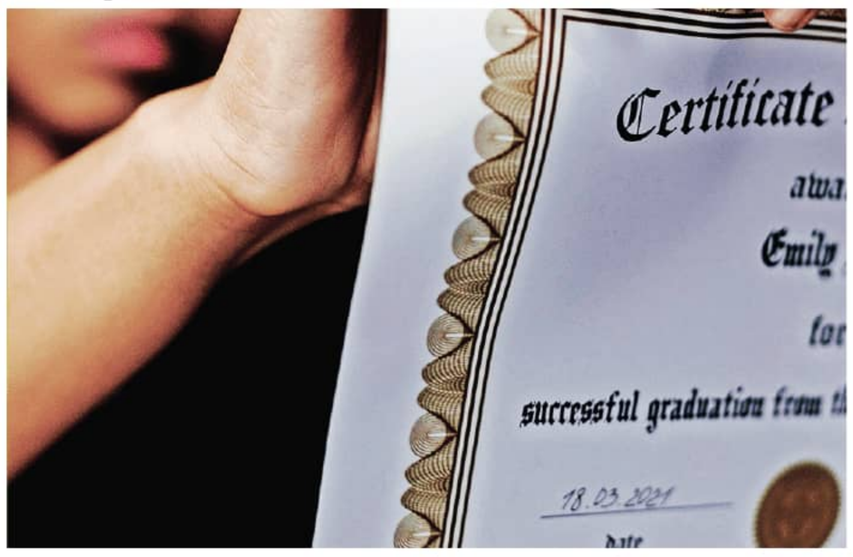


Aspirants cite RTI findings, claim irregularities in academic records, demand departmental probe into suspicious research certifications in the state

The decision to place responsibility on college principals to verify the authenticity of PhD degrees submitted by guest lecturer candidates has triggered strong reactions across Karnataka. While the Department of Collegiate Education has already completed two rounds of merit-based appointments for guest lecturers in 430 government first-grade colleges, fresh controversy has emerged over the genuineness of doctoral certificates produced by several selected candidates.

Sources indicate that more than 2,000 candidates across the state have submitted PhD certificates obtained from universities outside Karnataka. Allegations and complaints suggest that a significant number of these degrees may be fake. The move to shift the burden of verification onto individual college principals has raised serious concerns and resentment among aspirants who claim they were denied appointments. A retired Collegiate Department official said: "At present, principals can verify mark sheets and service certificates. However, questions are being raised about how they can independently verify the authenticity of PhD degrees awarded by universities in other states. Similar concerns have been expressed regarding disability certificates submitted under the special category. Although nodal officers, through District Health Officers, can verify disability claims, critics argue that ensuring accuracy in such cases is not always straightforward."

The Department of Collegiate Education invites applications for guest lecturer posts, prepares the merit list and conducts counselling centrally. Given this, many believe that the responsibility for verifying PhD credentials from external universities should also rest with the department rather than being passed on to principals. There is growing demand for the formation of a dedicated verification committee that can correspond directly with, or visit, the concerned universities to confirm the authenticity of the degrees.

According to candidates who have raised objections, PhD certificates have reportedly been submitted citing institutions located in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan, Maharashtra and Bihar, among others. An aggrieved candidate, S Kumar, alleged that information obtained under the RTI Act from certain universities revealed that some individuals had not completed their PhDs in the claimed academic years. He further claimed that when research supervisors were contacted by phone and message, they denied supervising such candidates. He demanded that the Education Department itself conduct a thorough authenticity check. However, many in academic circles argue that expecting principals to authenticate doctoral credentials from across India is neither practical nor fair and could expose them to administrative and legal complications.

Keep up the good work

In a bid to promote public assistance during road accidents and medical emergencies, the State Government has introduced fresh rules under the Karnataka Good Samaritan and Medical Professionals Act. The provisions aim to protect citizens who help accident victims from legal trouble or harassment. Complaints regarding violations can be filed with the Deputy Commissioner of the concerned district, and police personnel failing to comply will face action under the Karnataka State Police Conduct Rules, 1965.

A Good Samaritan Fund will be created, drawing support from the public, CSR contributions, the Karnataka Road Safety Authority and government schemes. Hospitals providing emergency care will be reimbursed through the Suvarna Arogya Suraksha Trust at Ayushman Bharat rates, with an appeal op-

tion for higher expenses. If helpers are required to attend court, travel and daily allowances above ₹100 may be reimbursed.

An annual Good Samaritan Award will be presented on January 26. The Health and Family Welfare Commissioner will oversee implementation and submit yearly reports. Public suggestions have been invited within 15 days. **— BMB**

Lake in vicinity of landfill also faces peril

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Professor at the Centre for Earth Sciences, IISc. Experts say the World Health Organisation (WHO) sets a guideline value of 50 mg/L for nitrate in drinking water to prevent infantile methemoglobinemia, commonly known as blue baby syndrome. High nitrate levels, particularly in bottle-fed infants under six months, can lead to impairment in blood oxygen transport. Long-term exposure is also linked to potential cancer risks (colorectal cancer) and thyroid issues.

Not just nitrate, levels of other metals such as cadmium, chromium, Arsenic, Copper, and Lead were also found to be high compared to nominal values expected for groundwater. The study thus

indicated that these metals are the main contributors to noncarcinogenic risks for both children and adults. During the pre-monsoon season, contamination from nitrate and other metals in the samples was high, indicating high pollution levels. All 25 samples showed potential for non-carcinogenic health risks for adults and children if consumed.

Lake distress

Researchers also raise concerns about pollution in Yele Mallappa Shetty Lake, located about 20 metre lower than the landfill level and within 5 kilometre of the dump yard. The study noted that a good number of migratory birds visit the lake. While the lake water is being used for municipal and industrial purposes, some leachate from the landfill might be entering the lake during the monsoon, polluting the lake water as well.

"Bengaluru's socio-economic landscape, marked by a large informal sector and a growing middle class, contributes to both the volume and complexity of waste management. While affluent areas often have access to organised waste collection and disposal systems, informal settlements and lower-income communities are frequently left to manage waste in unregulated conditions. This disparity in waste management practices leads to poorly managed dumpsites," the study has noted.

Shakti shifts gears, goes smart

The State Government is set to take its ambitious Shakti scheme to the next level by introducing a Shakti Smart Card in place of the existing Aadhaar-based free travel system. The proposed card will initially be used for free bus travel by eligible women and transgender passengers, but is being designed as a universal mobility solution along the lines of the National Common Mobility Card. In the future, the same card is expected to be valid on Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation services and the suburban rail network being developed by K-RIDE, enabling seamless travel across multiple modes of transport with a single card.

The Shakti Smart Card will also feature an e-purse facility, allowing users to preload money and make digital payments, with proposed UPI integration for added convenience. To ensure smooth implementation, a Special Purpose Vehicle will be set up in coordination with the State's four transport corporations under the leadership of the Transport Department's Principal Secretary. The model envisages using the interest earned on funds parked in the system for technology upgrades and infrastructure development, thereby reducing the financial burden on the exchequer. Distribution and activation of the cards will be facilitated through Seva Sindhu centres, Karnataka One and Bangalore One outlets, as well as major bus stations, while a dedicated mobile application will enable recharging, balance checks and digital ticket validation on a single platform. **— BMB**

Public urination row leads to assault

An advocate has filed a complaint at Cubbon Park Police Station alleging he was assaulted and verbally abused outside his office on Church Street, Bengaluru, after objecting to a man urinating on the building driveway.

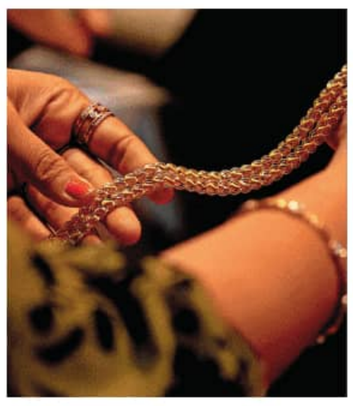
According to the complaint filed by Adarsh Gangal, the incident occurred on February 6 around 9 pm near his office at Kalmak Arcade. Gangal said he objected and asked the man to use a toilet. When he warned that he would call the police, the accused allegedly abused him in Kannada using obscene language and attempted to snatch his phone.

The complainant alleged the trio restrained him, assaulted him, and broke his spectacles.

He also claimed they forced him to delete a photograph taken as evidence. A security guard intervened and separated them. Police have registered a case and initiated an investigation. **BMB**

Jewellery vendor ruse: Gang loots Yeshwanthpur home

A six-member women's gang posing as artificial jewellery vendors allegedly stole ₹20,000 cash and 25 grams gold ornaments from an apartment complex in Yeshwanthpur, Bengaluru, alarming residents and raising fresh security concerns. The accused reportedly gained entry by pretending to sell North Karnataka-style imitation ornaments to residents.



According to police, the women approached the security guard seeking permission to enter the premises. While four members distracted him through conversation, two others allegedly slipped inside unnoticed and entered a ground-floor house located near the security room.

The suspects decamped with cash and gold ornaments before fleeing the premises. The entire incident was captured on CCTV cameras installed within the apartment complex.

Police have registered a case and launched efforts to identify and trace the accused. Officials have urged residents and security personnel to remain vigilant against similar theft attempts. Investigators are reviewing footage and questioning locals to prevent repeat incidents and strengthen apartment security measures across the area immediately and effectively. **BMB**

ED attaches properties worth ₹16.95 cr

The Directorate of Enforcement (ED), Bengaluru Zonal Office, has provisionally attached 11 immovable properties worth ₹16.95 crore belonging to Rajesh VR, Nagavalli BS, and their associated entities under the Prevention of Money Laundering Act. Officials said the properties, including land parcels, residential plots and buildings located in Ramanagara, Mysuru and Bengaluru, were allegedly acquired using proceeds of crime generated through fraudulent activities.The complaint alleged the society sanctioned loans to entities linked to its President and CEO without proper sureties, causing losses to depositors.Investigations revealed the accused allegedly diverted nearly ₹65 crore collected as public deposits through personal and fictitious accounts, later investing the funds in properties, businesses and personal expenses. Further investigation is ongoing. **BMB**

Flat-buyers allege housing fraud

A complaint alleging a ₹130-crore housing fraud has been filed against Shore Dwellings Pvt Ltd, senior officials of ICICI Bank, and other entities, after flat buyers approached the Bengaluru City Police Commissioner seeking action.Based on the complaint filed on February 11, police transferred the case to the Central Crime Branch (CCB) for detailed investigation.]However, buyers claimed the project land had been mortgaged to Yes Bank and later taken over by ICICI Bank, which allegedly sanctioned loans worth ₹130 crore despite existing customer payments.

The complainants further alleged diversion of funds and transfer of the project to another developer without consent. Police are examining financial records, agreements and transactions as part of the ongoing probe. **BMB**

Gold theft: Bank manager in hot water

A deputy manager at Indian Bank has been arrested for allegedly stealing nearly 2.7 kg of gold ornaments worth over ₹4 crore from pledged loan packets at its Girinagar branch in Bengaluru and using the proceeds for online betting and gambling.

The accused, identified as Kiran Kumar, allegedly misused his access to locker keys and siphoned off small quantities of pledged gold over time, particularly in the absence of the branch manager. The fraud surfaced when customers approached the bank to retrieve pledged ornaments and discrepancies were noticed.The missing gold weighed about 2,783.50 grams and was valued at over ₹4.12 crore.Police said the accused pawned the stolen gold at multiple shops to fund gambling activities. A case has been registered and about 700 grams of gold has been recovered so far. Investigation is ongoing. **BMB**

Aasare programme aids elderly resident

Under the "Aasare" community policing initiative, personnel from Karnataka State Police extended assistance to an 88-year-old bedridden senior citizen living alone within the limits of JC Nagar Police Station in Bengaluru.Acting on directions from the Assistant Commissioner of Police, officers visited the residence of Srinivasa Rao on February 15.

Authorities also arranged for a carpenter to repair the damaged front door, which had reportedly been broken earlier, restoring safety and security. Officials said the Aasare initiative focuses on providing urgent assistance, emotional support and protection to senior citizens living alone. Police identified the bedridden resident during routine checks and intervened to address his immediate needs. Police said such outreach programmes reflect their commitment to compassionate, citizen-centric policing and supporting vulnerable residents. **BMB**

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Slim ray of hope for Bellandur Lake

Bellandur Lake rejuvenation advances with major desilting completed, but residents flag funding transparency, sewage diversion gaps and long-term maintenance concerns

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Inspection reveals advancing bund reinforcement, partial wetland construction, diversion channels functioning, while marshals reduced and tracking demands intensify

Citizen stakeholders and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) conducted a site inspection on Saturday to review the ongoing rejuvenation of Bellandur Lake. The inspection aimed to ensure transparency, technical clarity and alignment with the approved rejuvenation plan. Residents say they are cautiously optimistic about the pace of desilting, but sustained governance and maintenance will determine whether the rejuvenation truly succeeds. Citizens assessed the progress and said that, while the majority of the desilting has been completed, concerns about funds running dry once again loom large.

"The current pace of the project is encouraging. If this is maintained, desilting could be completed by May 2026, ahead of the monsoon. However, desilting is only one part of the larger rejuvenation process. Significant challenges remain. There are murmurs that funds may run out again," said Sonali Singh, citizen volunteer. Locals said that although the state government released Rs 97 crore in November last year to advance the work, there is a lack of transparency in the expenditure. Moreover, concerns regarding the long-term guardianship of the lake persist. During the inspection, it was observed that while most of the lake fencing, dewatering and desilting work has been completed, wetland development is still under way. The lake bund height has also been increased to prevent sewage water from mixing with fresh rainwater during the monsoon.

"Contrary to some media reports, we found that the bund road within the lake was used only for silt movement. This monsoon will likely be the first time the lake fills with fresh rainwater after rejuvenation. While sewage has been diverted, it has not been fully eliminated, and inflows continue through diversion channels," added Singh. Notably, in a recent report filed with the National Green Tribunal (NGT), the BDA stated that a considerable portion of the Bellandur Lake rejuvenation work, including wetland development, has been completed. According to the BDA, while dewatering is almost complete (96.45 per cent), 66 per cent of the desilting of the tank bed and feeder channel has been completed. Moreover, 56 per cent of the wetland construction work at the main inlet has been completed.

Volunteers from the Bellandur Lake Group, who participated in the inspection, also raised concerns about lake protection going forward. They noted that, since the number of marshals manning the water body has been reduced considerably, issues such as waste dumping, encroachments and sewage inflow could undo much of the progress made so far. Locals also requested that the BDA fit silt lorries with a GPS tracking system for better accountability regarding daily trip counts. They further requested that transparency be maintained in relation to the status and progress of wetland creation works.

14,000 noise-related violations were registered in 2025

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

implementation of enforcement rules with regard to honking. They sought the issuance of a public notification against illegal horns and excessive honking, to be published on the BTP website. Traffic police should be equipped with sound meters or apps, and traffic wardens delegated reporting powers via the BTP Astram App. Consistent fines, publicised enforcement action, civic group awareness campaigns, and empowering active citizens as neighbourhood watchdogs were also recommended to reduce noise pollution.

"We are focusing on this because noise pollution is a slow poison; it affects one's health over time," said Prajna. "It creates mental anxiety, increases anger on the roads, and can escalate into bigger problems. The danger is not always immediate, but continuous honking has a serious long-term impact. In JP Nagar, we are conducting community programmes where volunteers stand at junctions holding placards highlighting how honking causes harm. We need to raise awareness that unnecessary honking is dangerous not just for others, but even for those who honk, as they too are exposed to the same harmful noise."

According to Bengaluru Traffic Police records, over 14,000 noise-related violations were registered in 2025. However, experts believe the actual number could be much higher, as unnecessary honking continues unabated across streets and neighbourhoods, often going unchecked despite existing regulations.

A study done by C4C had showcased about 80-90% of all honking is on account of habit, not necessity. "We have petitioned the Government to ensure non-compliant horns are not allowed to be manufactured and the Transport Department must not allow renewal of registration of vehicles with non-compliant horns," said Prajna. Rajkumar Dugar, Founder of C4C,has written to Minister for Road Transport and Highways (MoRTH) Nitin Gadkari, urging urgent action to control noise pollution from vehicle horns. In his letter, he highlighted that over the past four years, C4C has been running sustained awareness campaigns against non-compliant horns and excessive honking in Bengaluru. "When visitors enter India, the first thing they notice is loud, unnecessary honking, which has reached pandemic proportions. We need to act quickly towards a truly 'Shaanth Bharat'," said Dugar.

He requested the government to review and lower permitted decibel levels, enforce rules for horns, silencers, engine, and vehicle noise, provide calibrated decibel meters to authorities, take punitive action against manufacturers of non-compliant horns, mandate "ARAI Certified" horns at the manufacturing stage, and introduce horn testing at Vehicle Pollution-Under-Control/ Emission Testing Centres.

Dugar pointed out that C4C has conducted nearly 40 campaigns across Bengaluru advocating against unnecessary honking and is now reaching out to educational institutions to raise awareness among youth about responsible road behaviour and the impact of noise pollution. "If other countries can ensure strict enforcement against honking, we can do it too. For instance, I travelled to Bhutan and observed that people hardly honk there. They have a clear honking policy, and citizens genuinely follow it. With the right enforcement and public cooperation, India can achieve the same," he said.

Spanner in spammers' works

The Telecom Regulatory Authority of India (TRAI) has upgraded its mobile apps to curb unsolicited commercial calls and messages. The DND app now lets consumers appeal if spam complaints are closed by telecom operators without valid reasons, allowing escalation to higher authorities. In 2025, about 31 lakh spam complaints were filed, over 17 lakh through the DND app, underlining growing reliance on digital grievance redressal.

TRAI has also revamped the MySpeed app to support accurate 5G speed tests and assess video streaming and web browsing quality. To boost accessibility, the DND and MySpeed apps will now be available in Kannada and other regional languages, aiding rural users. An updated MyCall app, enabling customers to report call quality issues, will launch in March. Users can also trace the origin of SMS messages and calls from 1600-series numbers through the app. **— BMB**

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Concrete choke

Banashankari

A tree on 14th Cross, 2nd Stage, has been completely covered with concrete around its roots, effectively suffocating it.

Signal snag

Sanjaynagar

An overgrown tree is completely blocking the traffic signal on 80 ft Main Road near the Ramaiah Hospital junction, making it invisible to motorists taking a left turn, despite repeated complaints to the authorities.

Footpath chaos

Subramanya Nagar

Unauthorised vehicle parking on the six-foot footpath near the BTS Bus 82 stop on Subramanya Nagar Main Road (10th Cross) is forcing pedestrians onto the busy road, creating serious safety risks.

Cutlery laundry is clean, efficient way to tackle disposable menace

Homegrown Cutlery-as-a-Service model helps restaurants ditch disposables by handling washing, proving sustainability can be practical and scalable

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In a city struggling with mounting solid waste and disposable culture, an initiative is redefining how Bengaluru eats outside its homes. Started by an individual and now backed by sustainability experts, a unique Cutlery-as-a-Service (CaaS) model is helping restaurants and events move away from single-use disposables—by taking the washing burden off their hands.

Unlike conventional cutlery banks that require users to wash and return steel plates and spoons, this initiative functions as a full-fledged cutlery laundry. Steel cutlery is supplied, collected after use, professionally washed and sterilised, and returned, making the transition to reusables seamless.

Siddharth Munot, the founder of the initiative, said, "I was disturbed by the waste we are generating as individuals and as a community. I spent almost six months researching ways to reduce it. Replacing single-use disposables with reusables is an obvious option, but when we went deeper, we realised washing and hygiene were the real barriers pushing

Disposables are a big challenge as people choose it over reusables due to the price difference

people towards disposables."

That insight led Munot to start the service from his own home, initially catering to a single restaurant.

Today, the operation serves nearly six restaurants in Bengaluru, supported by a dedicated washing facility that meets hygiene and sterilisation standards.

"The major challenge we face is post-consumption food waste on the plates. Usually, after consumption, users don't remove the food waste from the plates and just put everything back in the bin. Chutneys and idli batter get dry, which makes it quite difficult to wash. Another major challenge is doing this in a financially sustainable way. Our biggest competition is disposables, which are cheap (especially paper with a plastic cover) and match the price of reusables, and washing them is a major challenge that makes this whole system financially viable," he said.

The model is simple. Users choose the required cutlery based on servings, the sets are delivered to restaurants or event venues, collected post-use, washed and sterilised at the facility, and returned for reuse.

However, running a cutlery laundry is not without challenges. Munot points to post-consumption food waste as a major operational hurdle.

"Right now, we wash approximately 5000 dishes/day + around 3000 spoons/day, which means we save almost 8000 disposables from going to landfills or incineration daily, as there is no recycling for these items, nor are they composted. This is just with 6 restaurants in the vicinity, just think if we can cover the whole of Bengaluru with these small washing pods and save lakhs of disposables going to landfill daily," he added.

Speaking of the initiative, Plog Raja said, "The Indian Ploggers Army celebrates innovative initiatives like this. We need more 'eco-preneurs' who challenge the status quo."

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Revenue crunch may delay key infrastructure projects

Despite presenting a record ₹4.09 lakh crore Budget for 2025–26, the State Government may struggle to meet its own tax revenue targets, raising concerns over funding for development works. Officials say ₹48,306 crore must be mobilised by March, but key sources such as commercial taxes, stamps and registration, and motor vehicle taxes are unlikely to meet projections. Estimates indicate a shortfall of nearly ₹15,000 crore from these streams. The Excise Department is the only strong performer, collecting ₹33,371 crore against its ₹40,000 crore target by January, reflecting over 13% growth year-on-year. **–BMB**

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SUNDAY READ

Birth pangs

India sees steady surge in C-sections amid medical and social factors

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As per the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare data presented in Parliament, the number of C-section deliveries in India has steadily increased over the years. The number of C-section births has more than quadrupled from 12,02,889 in 2008-09 to 54,34,735 in 2024-25. The data clearly shows that more women are delivering through surgical intervention than before. This trend raises important questions about whether a rise in high-risk pregnancies is driving the increase, or if changing childbirth practices including parental preference and planned deliveries are also playing a role.

The upward trend continued in the following years, with C-sections rising to 32,52,142 in 2015-16 and 39,49,027 in 2018-19. Despite a slight slowdown during the pandemic period, the numbers remained high at 40,98,969 in 2020-21. In recent years, the surge has been even more pronounced, with C-section deliveries climbing to 49,93,291 in 2022-23, 51,43,156 in 2023-24, and reaching 54,34,735 in 2024-25.

Health experts say the increase reflects a combination of genuine medical needs and evolving childbirth practices. There has been a rise in high-risk pregnancies, including those involving advanced maternal age, pre-existing medical conditions, and pregnancies conceived through assisted reproductive technologies, all of which require closer monitoring and sometimes surgical delivery.

"The development of advanced fetal monitoring systems has made medical professionals more vigilant regarding any indications of fetal distress. The medical field now requires earlier interventions because both doctors and families consider maternal and neonatal safety to be their main priority. Decision-making in borderline cases is also influenced by medico-legal concerns and the need to prevent unexpected labour complications," said Dr Kavitha Kovi, member of the Federation of Obstetrics and Gynaecological Societies of India (FOGSI) and Head of the Department of Obstetrics and Gynaecology at Aster Women & Children Hospital, Bengaluru.

Responding to a Lok Sabha query on rising C-section rates in private hospitals compared with public hospitals, the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare cited a 2022 study by the Population Research Centre at the JSS Institute of Economic Research, Dharwad. The study identified key reasons including clinical decisions driven by advanced maternal age, multiple pregnancies, fetal distress, previous C-sections, prolonged labour, placenta previa, maternal complications, and patient or community preferences.

Doctors say patient preference plays a notable role, particularly in private healthcare settings. "Among economically well-off patients, there are two extremes: one group is highly motivated for normal delivery and actively prepares for it, while another group prefers elective caesarean delivery and does not wish to undergo labour pain. Fear of labour pain is a major influencing factor. However, epidural anaesthesia has significantly helped address this concern," said Dr Gayathri BN, member of FOGSI and consultant obstetrician and gynaecologist at Rainbow Children's Hospital, Bannerghatta.

She added that there is a common misconception that epidurals increase caesarean rates. "In my experience, they often increase normal delivery rates. When pain is well controlled, the mother is more relaxed, cervical dilation progresses smoothly, and labour advances effectively. Hospitals with round-the-clock anaesthetic support can offer epidural services safely," she said.

Health professionals also point to delayed pregnancies and lifestyle factors as contributors. While genuine medical complications have increased, sedentary lifestyles and lack of physical fitness can affect labour outcomes.

"Among economically well-off patients, there are two extremes: one group actively prepares for normal delivery, while another prefers elective caesarean delivery to avoid labour pain –Dr Gayathri BN, obstetrician

C-Section

TOTAL NUMBER OF C-SECTION DELIVERIES REPORTED (INDIA)

2008–2009	–	12,02,889
2009–2010	–	15,26,241
2010–2011	–	17,04,625
2011–2012	–	20,98,326
2012–2013	–	23,19,517
2013–2014	–	24,79,381
2014–2015	–	27,26,757
2015–2016	–	32,52,142
2016–2017	–	34,62,386
2017–2018	–	35,88,587
2018–2019	–	39,49,027
2019–2020	–	41,52,335
2020–2021	–	40,98,969
2021–2022	–	45,33,190
2022–2023	–	49,93,291
2023–2024	–	51,43,156
2024–2025	–	54,34,735

Women between 25 and 35 years generally have better muscle strength, stamina, and overall health, which support normal delivery. After 35 or 40 years, muscle strength declines and the incidence of comorbidities such as diabetes and hypertension rise, increasing risks during labour and making caesarean sections more likely.

"Women who actively prepare for normal delivery through yoga, walking, and antenatal exercises often have better chances of vaginal delivery," Dr Gayathri said.

Dr Kavitha noted that the perception that most C-sections are unnecessary oversimplifies a complex medical situation. Differences in practices between institutions require active monitoring and transparency, she said, adding that public awareness has improved, with more women seeking second opinions and asking informed questions to ensure surgical decisions are justified and patient-centred.

Under the National Health Mission, the government has taken several steps to regulate unnecessary C-sections and improve maternal and neonatal outcomes. These measures include displaying C-section rates in CGHS hospitals, strengthening data reporting, embedding C-section audits under the LaQshya programme, and training healthcare workers through initiatives such as Daksh, SBA, and NPM.

Government data reveals a sharp rise in Caesarean deliveries, driven by high-risk pregnancies, delayed motherhood, evolving patient choices, and clinical caution, prompting efforts to ensure medically necessary procedures

Programmes such as Janani Suraksha Yojana, Janani Shishu Suraksha Karyakram, PMSMA and e-PMSMA, and SUMAN aim to ensure free and quality institutional deliveries and antenatal care. Meanwhile, FOGSI promotes the rational use of C-sections through clinical guidelines, staff training for assisted vaginal delivery, public awareness campaigns on the benefits of natural childbirth, and continuing medical education.

Working with government authorities, the organisation aims to ensure that every C-section is medically necessary, with a focus on safeguarding the health and well-being of both mother and child as India continues to grapple with the complex factors shaping childbirth trends.

Precision in the OT, Leadership in the Classroom
Dr Vijay Girish Is Shaping Advanced Orthopaedic Care

With over 20 years of clinical experience and more than 12,000 successful orthopaedic and sports related procedures to his credit, Dr Vijay Girish stands out as a surgeon, teacher and mentor shaping the future of orthopaedics in India. Known for surgical precision, adoption of modern technology and a patient first philosophy, he has built a reputation that extends well beyond Bengaluru.

An accomplished Robotic Knee Replacement Surgeon, Arthroscopy Specialist and expert in Complex Trauma Care, Dr Vijay Girish has received advanced training in Australia, Britain and Italy. Exposure to global surgical systems has enabled him to incorporate internationally accepted techniques into his practice. "Continuous learning and global exposure help us deliver safer, more predictable outcomes for patients," he says.

He currently serves as Senior Consultant at Hosmat Hospital, Bengaluru, where he is also the Director of the Arthroscopy Fellowship Programme. In addition, he consults at Vijaysheela Sports Orthopaedics Clinic on New BEL Road, Bengaluru. As a DNB Orthopaedics and FNB Ortho faculty and mentor, he actively trains young orthopaedic surgeons and arthroscopy fellows. Many emerging specialists credit him for hands-on surgical guidance and structured academic mentoring. "Teaching is a responsibility. When we train young surgeons, we are indirectly shaping the quality of care patients will receive in the future," Dr Vijay Girish explains.

His academic contributions are equally notable. He has authored several national and international peer reviewed research papers in orthopaedic surgery, arthroscopy and sports orthopaedics. His work has drawn attention in global medical forums and reflects his commitment to evidence based practice.

Surgical Expertise

Dr Vijay Girish specialises in advanced knee, shoulder and ankle procedures, focusing on joint preservation and biomechanical accuracy. His key areas of expertise include ACL reconstruction and meniscus root repair, ligament reconstruction surgeries, and revision knee and complex arthroscopy procedures for failed or complicated cases.

He is highly experienced in rotator cuff repair, shoulder joint replacement and reverse shoulder replacement surgeries. In the field of joint replacement, he performs robotic assisted hip and knee replacement procedures, ensuring greater alignment precision and improved implant positioning. "Robotic assistance enhances accuracy, reduces soft tissue damage and supports quicker rehabilitation," he notes. His proficiency in managing severe accident injuries and complex trauma cases further strengthens his surgical profile. Patients with multiple fractures or complicated joint damage benefit from his structured approach and multidisciplinary coordination.

Dr Vijay Girish, Robotic Knee Replacement Surgeon, Arthroscopy Specialist and expert in Complex Trauma Care. Ph: 9845385217

In recognition of his contribution to sports orthopedics, robotic joint replacement and complex trauma care, he has been honoured with an Individual Excellence Award. Surgical skill, ethical medical practice, international training, research contributions and compassionate patient care define his professional journey.

Dr Vijay Girish strongly advocates joint preservation, correct biomechanics and accelerated recovery protocols. Whether treating professional athletes, fitness enthusiasts or elderly patients seeking mobility, his focus remains consistent. Restore function, minimise pain and help patients return confidently to their routine life.

For many in the orthopaedic community, he is not just a surgeon but a mentor nurturing the next generation. For patients, he is a dependable specialist committed to delivering world class care with integrity and precision.

Precision Meets Compassion
Dr Shankar E.'s Two Decades of Advanced Bone and Joint Care

In a city that never slows down, mobility is everything. When joint pain, sports injuries or age related wear and tear begin to interfere with daily life, patients turn to Dr Shankar E., a seasoned orthopaedic surgeon with over two decades of experience in bone and joint care.

At Dr Shankar's Orthopaedic and Speciality Centre in Basaveshwaranagar, West Bengaluru, the focus is clear: precise diagnosis, advanced treatment and compassionate care. Known for his steady surgical hand and patient centric approach, Dr Shankar has built a reputation for delivering consistent outcomes in complex orthopaedic cases like advanced and complex trauma surgeries, hip and knee joint replacements .

Expert in Sports Medicine

Dr Shankar has treated athletes competing at state and national levels, including participants in elite performance events. He performs arthroscopic primary and multi ligament surgeries, meniscal repairs, advanced shoulder arthroscopic surgeries like rotator cuff repairs, SLAP repair, revision ACL reconstruction "Sports injuries require not just treatment but structured rehabilitation and long term joint preservation. The goal is always to get athletes back to peak performance safely," says Dr Shankar.

Academic Excellence

His academic foundation reflects depth and rigour. He completed his MBBS from M.S. Ramaiah Medical College, Bengaluru, pursued post graduation at JSS Medical College, Mysuru, and earned his DNB in Orthopaedic Surgery from K.G. Hospital and Postgraduate Medical Institute, Coimbatore. In addition to his independent practice, he serves as a visiting consultant at leading hospitals including Manipal Hospital, Yeshwanthpur, Fortis Hospital, Rajajinagar, GM Hospital, Nagarbhavi, and People Tree fortis Hospitals.

Dr Shankar E., Dr Shankar's Orthopaedic and Speciality Centre, Basaveshwaranagar

Expertise

Dr Shankar has successfully performed more than 3,000 knee replacement and arthroscopic keyhole surgeries. Early in his career, under senior guidance, he carried out a successful hip replacement on a 98-year old patient, a milestone that reflects both confidence and clinical skill. His expertise includes arthroplasty joint replacements using chromium cobalt implants and, in select cases, advanced Oxinium implants for enhanced durability.

Advanced Precision

What sets Dr Shankar apart is his commitment to evolving with medical science. He has adopted robotic assisted knee replacement techniques that improve alignment accuracy and reduce tissue damage. "Robotic support enhances precision during surgery. Patients experience less blood loss, reduced pain and faster recovery," he explains.

Effective Pain Relief

Equally significant is his work in Orthobiologics, a non surgical treatment pathway designed to stimulate the body's own healing response. Through Platelet Rich Plasma therapy and stem cell based procedures derived from bone marrow or fat tissue, damaged ligaments, muscles and joints can be treated without immediate surgery. "For many patients, orthobiologic therapy offers effective pain relief and functional improvement. It is particularly useful when surgery can be delayed or avoided," says Dr Shankar.

Emerging Technologies

A member of the Indian Orthopaedic Association and Karnataka Orthopaedic Association, he actively keeps pace with emerging technologies and evidence based practices. In 2017, at an International Health Summit in New Delhi, he was honoured with the Emerging Orthopaedic Surgeon of South India award. He has also authored scientific papers and regularly conducts awareness sessions on bone and joint health through professional and community forums. For patients seeking dependable orthopaedic care backed by experience, technology and integrity, Dr Shankar offers more than treatment. He offers renewed movement and restored confidence.

Dr Shankar's Orthopaedic and Speciality Centre,3rd Stage, Basaveshwaranagar Bengaluru. Contact: 09986969911

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

MANTISES' BRUTAL BEGINNINGS

Our reader shares a striking glimpse into the ruthless life cycle of the Praying Mantis, where survival is shaped by extreme odds and fierce instincts. From the female consuming her mate to boost reproductive success to hundreds of nymphs emerging from the ootheca only to prey on one another, the image captures nature's stark reality where only a few survive to carry forward the next generation.

The picture was clicked by reader **P Suryanarayana**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Indira Canteens face quality drop, staff shortages across Bengaluru outlets

Ground reports reveal declining food standards, infrastructure gaps and manpower crunch, raising concerns about service delivery in Bengaluru's flagship subsidised meal scheme

What was once showcased as a model welfare scheme to feed the urban poor is now drawing criticism across Bengaluru. A reality check at several Indira Canteens in the city has revealed declining food quality, poor maintenance and acute staff shortages, leaving beneficiaries disappointed. Launched in 2017 as a pet project of the Siddaramaiah 1.0 government, the scheme provides breakfast at ₹5 and lunch or dinner at ₹10. Though the canteens continue to attract crowds, many beneficiaries say standards have slipped over the years, raising concerns about consistency and oversight.

Customers complain that idlis are often hard, sambar is watery and portion sizes are too small to be filled. "The idli is not soft and the sambar tastes like coloured water. One plate does not fill the stomach," said Veluswamy, a daily wage worker at a central Bengaluru outlet. While officials maintain that each meal meets prescribed quantity norms, regular visitors say the food often falls short of expectations.

The government has prescribed a fixed weekly menu that includes idli sambar for breakfast and mudde, rice, sambar, vegetable curry and buttermilk for lunch, with rice items or chapati for dinner. However, several outlets were found serving repetitive items with little variation. Food is supplied through designated central kitchens, but quality appears inconsistent across locations. "For ₹10 we are not expecting luxury, but at least the food should be filling and hygienic," said Narayaamma, a regular at an Indira Canteen near KR Market.

Infrastructure issues are also a concern. At some locations, garbage piles up outside the premises and drinking water is supplied only through tankers. In a few canteens, staff said water motors are not functioning, forcing them to manually draw water from sumps.

Once hailed for feeding the urban poor, Indira Canteens now struggle with inconsistent meals, hygiene concerns and operational lapses, prompting beneficiaries to seek urgent improvements while recognising the scheme's importance

Toilets, though constructed in most centres, remain locked in several areas including Rajajinagar and Chalavadi Palya, causing hardship for both staff and visitors.

Staff shortage is another major issue. In several canteens, a single employee manages serving food, collecting cash and cleaning tables. Though each outlet is supposed to have multiple workers, many operate with minimal manpower. Employees, some of whom have worked for seven to eight years, say they earn between ₹9,000 and ₹11,000 per month and salaries are not always paid on time. "My husband passed away and I depend entirely on this job. Even ₹9,000 does not come regularly," said a woman employee.

Adding to the inconvenience, most canteens still accept only cash payments. In a city that widely uses digital transactions, the absence of UPI or card facilities has forced some customers to walk away. While many acknowledge that the scheme has helped curb hunger, citizens say the government must address operational lapses to restore confidence in the programme. **— BMB**

The quiet canteen building behind BBMP gates highlights operational gaps, including staffing shortages and inconsistent upkeep reported across several outlets

DID YOU KNOW?

The year's first solar eclipse will unfold over Antarctica, offering a rare celestial spectacle for the few researchers and wildlife inhabiting the remote continent. This annular eclipse, often called a "ring of fire," occurs when the moon passes between Earth and the sun while positioned slightly farther away in its orbit, leaving a bright ring of sunlight visible around its edges. While the full annular view will be limited to Antarctica, observers in southern Chile and Argentina, as well as parts of southeastern Africa including Madagascar, Lesotho and South Africa, may witness a partial eclipse if weather conditions are favourable.
Solar eclipses occur when the sun, moon and Earth align precisely, allowing the moon to cast a shadow on Earth and block some or all of the sun's light. Experts note the phenomenon is possible due to the unique balance between the sun's size and its distance from Earth compared with the moon. Viewing precautions are essential, as looking directly at the sun can damage eyes. Certified eclipse glasses or indirect viewing methods like pinhole projectors are recommended. — AP

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Boy who appeared in Bad Bunny's Super Bowl show is not the 5-year-old detained by ICE in Minneapolis

The Claim: Social media posts claimed Bad Bunny handed his Grammy to Liam Conejo Ramos, the Minnesota boy recently detained by immigration authorities, during his Super Bowl halftime performance cameo appearance.
Fact: The child was actually Lincoln Fox Ramadan, a five-year-old actor from California cast as young Benito, confirmed by his Instagram, school officials and reports, debunking claims linking Liam.

Social media users mistakenly identified a young boy who appeared in Bad Bunny's Super Bowl halftime show as Liam Conejo Ramos, a 5-year-old who, along with his father, had recently been detained by immigration authorities in Minnesota and held at a US Immigration and Customs Enforcement facility in Texas. In reality, the child in the performance was Lincoln Fox Ramadan, a 5-year-old child actor from Costa Mesa, California, according to his Instagram profile. After Bad Bunny performed his song "NUEVAYoL," cameras cut to Lincoln watching footage of the artist accepting his Grammy Award for album of the year the previous week. The singer then approached the boy and handed him what appeared to be a Grammy, creating a symbolic moment that quickly circulated online.

Claims soon spread on social media that the child was Liam Conejo Ramos and that Bad Bunny had handed his Grammy to him during the halftime show. However, this claim is false. Lincoln later shared a post describing the experience as "an emotional, unforgettable day being cast as the young Benito, a symbolic moment where the future hands the past a Grammy," adding that it was a reminder that dreams can come true at any age. His post included photos from the performance and a childhood picture of Bad Bunny, whose real name is Benito Antonio Martínez Ocasio.

Lincoln also used his platform to express support for Liam, writing that he was "sending love to Liam Ramos" and emphasising that everyone deserves peace and love in America. Another post featured a video of his cameo, captioned with gratitude for the opportunity to appear alongside the global music star.

Meanwhile, Liam and his father, Adrian Conejo Arias, originally from Ecuador, were detained by immigration officers in a Minneapolis suburb on January 20 and taken to a detention facility in Dilley, Texas. They returned to Minneapolis on February 1 after a judge ordered their release. Images of officers surrounding Liam, who was wearing a blue bunny hat and carrying a Spider-Man backpack, sparked public outrage over immigration enforcement actions.

Columbia Heights Public Schools confirmed that Liam was not involved in the halftime show. A spokesperson said the child and his family were staying out of the public eye during this period.

Lincoln, who is half Egyptian and half Argentine, has also modelled for major retailers. Bad Bunny, a six-time Grammy winner, recently made history when his album "DeBÍ TiRAR MáS FOToS" became the first Spanish-language album to win album of the year. **— AP**

Former players and captains insist Team India must not rest on its 'favourite' laurel

India Vs Pakistan: What the stars foretell...

After all the off-field drama and dialogues, it's time for the real action to begin. And when India takes on Pakistan on a cricket field, there is no dearth of advice, caution, tips to perform well, the psychological aspect, etc. etc.

India has lost to Pakistan in World Cup cricket only once. That was in the 2021 T20 World Cup and India has beaten them in their last five T20I meetings.

From the respective captains to former players who have been in that situation, present players all have their own take on how to approach the game or how prepared the teams are, the strengths, weaknesses, what needs to be done et al. Just before the India Vs Pakistan group match in Colombo on Feb 15, 2026, here are some interesting comments coming through:

Clockwise from second left, India's Ishan Kishan, Axar Patel, Tilak Varma, Arshdeep Singh, Sanju Samson and Mohammed Siraj during a practice session ahead of their match with Pakistan, at R Premadasa Stadium, in Colombo

India skipper Suryakumar Yadav declared in emphatic terms that his team "all set to go," The skipper expressed immense confidence in the balance of his side.

"The return of Jasprit Bumrah to peak fitness is a major deterrent for future opponents. I mean, yeah, it was a big plus to see Bumrah bowl a quota of all the four overs. Good to have him back in the side. He's all set to go for the next game as well," Suryakumar Yadav stated in a direct reference to the clash against Pakistan.

India's assistant coach Ryan ten Doeschate let that "It's going to be a challenge going to Colombo, where Pakistan have been for the last two weeks, and we're fully focused on just bringing our best game to that fixture next week."

Meanwhile Pakistan captain Salman Ali Agha struck a confident and defiant note in a post-match conference in Colombo. "We are Pakistan, we do things differently to the world. An unconventional mindset could be the difference-maker, Agha said.

"There is always room for improvement. We like to bowl well in the power play. In patches we have been good, but we can be more clinical," he added.

Former India captain Rohit Sharma warned the Indian team not to take their clash against Pakistan lightly, even though they are installed as the favourites. "Firstly, I never believed in this word called favourites. It's such a funny game, and we've seen it now. There's so much that has happened in the last 10 years of international cricket. All these teams have so much exposure now playing T20 cricket. You can't just go and think that it's a two-point victory for us. You just have to play good cricket on that particular day to achieve those points otherwise you might end up going home without anything," Rohit Sharma said.

Today's match

West Indies	V/S	Nepal
11.00 am		
USA	V/S	Namibia
03.00 pm		
India	V/S	Pakistan
07.00 pm		

"So it's not about what you've done in the past, what is your team like, players are in form or not form. You just have to play well on that particular day because every team is capable of beating any team on that particular day," he added.

"We are very excited to play. We got to know that the match was going to take place the day before. We are ready to play. We are watching all the teams. We are watching the bowlers and the batsmen. All the players and team members are ready to play and are well prepared for all the challenges," was how southpaw Tilak Varma reacted to the clash. He had played a blazing knock against Pakistan in the Asia Cup final in Dubai in September 2025 which India won.

"Namibia's attack lacked the discipline to sustain pressure. More accomplished spin attacks will not be so charitable," said former India batsman Aakash Chopra. "The bowling wasn't that good, so India must consider that if they don't improve on this finish, they could face problems."

"When you ask a question like that, meaning where we need to improve if I was a support staff, you need to have solutions too. Only thing you can say is can you use the crease more and try to use the pace they have," said former India wicket-keeper batsman Dinesh Karthik.

– SS Shreekumar

Ireland register second-highest total in tournament history

Ireland's players shake hands with Oman's players after they won the T20 World Cup cricket match against Oman in Colombo, Sri Lanka, Saturday

Ireland achieved their highest-ever T20 International total and the second-highest in the history of the ICC T20 World Cup during their match against Oman on Saturday.

The Irish side posted 235/5 in their allotted 20 overs, the second-best total in tournament history, behind Sri Lanka's 260/6 against Kenya in Johannesburg in 2007.

Coming to the match, Oman won the toss and opted to bowl first. The Irish lost their four wickets for just 64 runs. However, a fine captain's knock from Lorcan Tucker (94* in 51 balls, with 10 fours and four sixes) and his 101-run stand with Gareth Delany (56 in 30 balls, with three fours and four sixes) brought them back in the game. Later, a brutal finish from George Dockrell (35* in nine balls, with five sixes) took Ireland to 235/5 in 20 overs.

Ireland	235/5 (20)
Oman	139 (18)

Shakeel Ahmed (3/33 in four overs) was the pick of the bowlers for Oman.

With the win, Ireland moved to fourth position in their group, having won one and lost two matches. Oman, meanwhile, remains at the bottom of the table after losing all three of their games. **–ANI**

'Glad to get over the line, haven't had perfect game yet'

England skipper Harry Brook on Saturday expressed relief after England bounced back from a defeat in their outing to beat Scotland, but added that the two-time winners are yet to play their best cricket in the T20 World Cup.

England's Tom Banton, right, and Will Jacks celebrate after England won the match against Scotland

Having lost to the West Indies earlier, England notched a comfortable five-wicket win over Scotland. Adil Rashid (3/36) and Liam Dawson (2/34) helped England keep Scotland to 152 in 19.4 overs, which they chased down with 10 balls to spare. Tom Banton made 63 not out. "Just glad we got over the line. Absolutely, we were over the moon. They (Scotland) batted well against the spinners in their first spells, but we dragged it back really well," Brooks said at the post-match presentation. "Haven't quite had the perfect game yet, all been a bit niggly, hopefully we can play our best against Italy and put some smiles on faces back home," he added. Brooks lauded Banton and pacer Jofra Archer who also hit his straps with figures of 2/24 from his quota of four overs. Banton, adjudged the Player of the Match, said a team needs to keep coming back after reverses in fortunes. Scotland captain Richie Berrington said execution of the team plan was slightly off in the middle overs. "We fought back really well, needed one of me or Brucie (Tom Bruce) to go on. We knew spin was going to be key through the middle, but our execution was slightly offphase," Berrington said. **–PTI**

Scotland	152 (19.4)
England	155/5 (18.2)

South Africa beat New Zealand by 7 wickets

South Africa's captain Aiden Markram, right, and Dewald Brevis run between the wickets during the match with New Zealand in Ahmedabad on Saturday

South Africa rode on skipper Aiden Markram and Marco Jansen's batting and bowling exploits to beat New Zealand by seven wickets and all but qualify for the Super 8 stage of the T20 World Cup here on Saturday.

Jansen recorded career-best figures of 4/40 as South Africa restricted New Zealand to 175 for 7 after opting to bowl in the crucial match.

Mark Chapman missed his personal milestone by a narrow margin when he fell for 48 to Jansen in the 14th over, but none of the other New Zealand batters could push on after making starts.

Finn Allen (31) and Daryl Mitchell (32) were also among the runs for the Blackcaps but they just could not find any momentum to push towards a big total.

Chasing, Markram made unbeaten 86 off 44 balls, which equalled his career-best T20I score, and Quinton de Kock scored 20 off 14 as the duo shared 62 runs off 28 balls for the opening stand, while Ryan Rickelton made 21 off 11 balls.

Dewald Brevis (21 off 17) made useful contribution before the duo of Markram and David Miller (24 not out of 17) closed out the contest, reaching 178 for 3 in 17.1 overs overs. **–PTI**

New Zealand	175/7 (20)
South Africa	178/3 (17.1)

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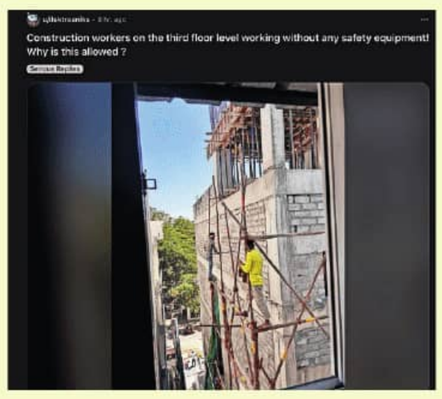
SOCIALTATTLE

That went viral NOTHING CEO makes a Grand Entrance to celebrate Nothing's First flagship store on 14th February, in Indiranagar. The White auto was adorned with the brand's signature transparent design cues and dot matrix logo. CEO Carl Pai leaned into the local vibe and cancelled his flight to spend another day at the start up capital of India.

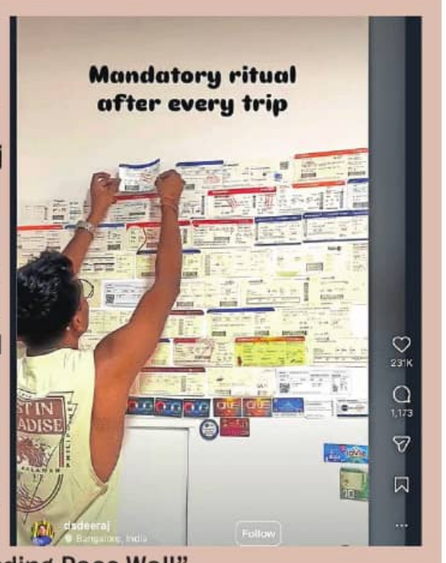
Rahul Dravid is honoured by the Karnataka State Cricket Association (KSCA) at Chinnaswamy Stadium where he shares a heartfelt message with the audience in which he mentions that he is grateful for the opportunities given to him by KSCA, and the iconic stadium he calls home. It was posted on Karnataka Portfolio on instagram.

PROUD MOMENT
KSCA Honoured Rahul Dravid by naming a stand at Bengaluru's M Chinnaswamy Stadium after him.
HE SAID
It's been a second home to me, and it's been a place where, as Anil said, we probably spent more time here than we have spent in our houses.

After a Reddit user by the username u/ilektraaniks posted on /bangalore sub reddit, that there was no safety equipment was provided to the workers, netizens broke into a debate about how low income groups are treated in metropolitan areas.



In a viral post on instagram, 25-year-old Dheeraj posted a reel of him decorating his wall with his international travels, calling it a Mandatory Ritual for him. He calls the wall , "Boarding Pass Wall"



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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I vidhya suresh W/o D suresh kumar R/o Bangalore have changed my name from vidhya jayapaul to vidhya suresh kumar

I Ranjith R/o Deshani village Javagal Hobli Hassan Dt-573122 Have changed my name to Renuka Prasad D N for all the purpose

I, Madhu Suresh D/o Suresh R/o No 40 Janata Coloni Rajapura Hennagara Post, Jigani, Bengaluru-560105 Have Changed My Name to Madhu for All Purposes.

MY Son, Vidhruth.A, born on 28 July 2019, residing at No.101/2, 2nd main, 8th cross, Chamrajpet, Bangaluru, shall henceforth be known as Kadhirav.A. Anandan.S (Father)

I, AIMAN S J D/o SYED JABIR R/o Waseem Building, Ground Floor, Dead End Road, K K Layout, Beside Umar Bin Khatab Masjid, Hoskote, Bengaluru Rural-562114 have changed my name to AIMAN for all purposes

I, PRIYANKA, Residing at No. C0301, Keya Spring Apartment Arekere, Near Mithai Mahal Restaurant, Bangalore -560076 have changed my name to PRIYANKA KAWADIA, vide affidavit dated 09/02/2026 sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, EKRAM UR RASHEED M S, Resident of #204, Srinivasa Nilyaya, 4th Cross, Kannada Kasthuri Road, T Dasarahalli, Bengaluru - 560057, have changed my name as IKRAM UR RASHEED vide affidavit dated 12.02.2026, sworn before notary Anuradha D, Bengaluru.

I, TANVEERAHAMAD SHAIKH S/o Rafiuddin Aged About 38 Years R/at Flat No.27/B, 2nd Floor,Near Orion Mall, Jai Bharath Nagar, B'luru-560033 have changed my name to TANVEER SHAIKH vide affidavit dtd:14/02/2026 sworn before notary UDAY KUMAR K, Bengaluru.

I, RAJITHA RANJITH KUMAR D/o Narayanan Kutty Aged About 42 Years R/at No.42, Mrudulam, Revanna Layout, Anandapura,TC Palaya, B'luru, 560036 have changed my name to RAJITHA NARAYANAN KUTTY vide affidavit dtd:13/02/2026 sworn before notary Uday Kumar K,B'luru.

I, Vidya Pankaj Kapse, Wife of Pankaj Babanrao Kapse, aged about 44 years, residing at A502, Isiri Stone Creek Apartment, Yelenahalli Village Road, Akshayanagar, Begur, Bangalore, 560068 declare that Vidya Kapse, and Vidya Pankaj Kapse refer to the same person. Henceforth, I will use Vidya Pankaj Kapse for all legal purposes.

I, M Saravanan residing at No. 54, ATC Nagar, Dasanaickenpatty, Salem 636201 hereby state that in my Minors Daughter Jarshika Saravanan's school record the 1) Father name is mentioned as Saravanan instead of M.Saravanan 2) Mother name is mentioned as Vinothini instead of S.Vinothini and her name is mentioned as S.Jarshika instead Of Jarshika Saravanan, Names have been rectified as said above vide affidavit dated 12-02-2026 before notary B.M.Chandrashekar Bangalore.

HEALTH TIP: Fermented foods contain probiotics that support gut health, helping with bloating and digestion

Try a 10-minute power nap after lunch to recharge, lower stress hormones, and sharpen memory

All you need to know about...

Energy boosters

Dates
Two large dates can provide close to 50 kcal. They are a storehouse of minerals associated with energy production like iron, copper, manganese, calcium, potassium, vitamin B complex etc. The iron and folic acid present in dates prevent iron deficiency anaemia. The fibre in dates protects the gut, improves bowel movements and in turn immunity.

Jamba juice
Jambul or the Java Plum is a High Cal fruit. The fruit is high in simple sugars leading to rapid energy production in the body immediately post consumption. Jamboline- a glucoside present in the seeds of Java plum has known to be an excellent weight loss supplement. It also had cardio-protective effects.

Tea extracts
Tea extracts are getting pretty popular globally. Both green and black tea extracts are available. The cardinal ingredient in the green tea extract is green tea catechins (GTC), which comprise four major epicatechin derivatives. Flavonoids, known as kaempferol, quercetin, and myricetin are potent anti-oxidants that boost body's energy stores.

Ginseng
Siberian ginseng is an herb that is an adaptogen (normalizes bodily functions). It is an excellent stress buster and helps to keep a check on the immune system, particularly for fighting infection and stress. It aids the liver in detoxifying heavy toxins like chemotherapeutic agents and radiation. Siberian ginseng provides instantaneous energy, helping to fight chronic fatigue syndrome. It also improves the functions of T and B lymphocytes.

Spirulina
Being rich in Vitamin B12, Spirulina is a powerhouse of energy. It is loaded with vitamin A making it an excellent anti-oxidant and immune booster. Chlorophyll and other carotenoids present in spirulina help to purify blood.

—Femina

TASTE OF LOVE

Try these recipes to make the love last longer

STRAWBERRY CREAM CHEESE STUFFED FRENCH TOAST HEARTS

INGREDIENTS
- Thick bread slices – 4
- Cream cheese – ½ cup
- Icing sugar – 2 tbsp
- Fresh strawberries – ½ cup, chopped
- Eggs – 2
- Milk – ¼ cup
- Vanilla extract – ½ tsp
- Butter – for frying
- Maple syrup & strawberries for serving

METHOD
- Mix cream cheese, icing sugar, and strawberries.
- Cut bread into heart shapes and sandwich with filling.
- Whisk eggs, milk, and vanilla dip sandwiches lightly.
- Pan-fry in butter until golden on both sides.
- Serve with syrup and fresh fruit.

Chefs Tip: Use a cookie cutter for perfect heart shapes.

by Executive Chef Vilas Dhakunte, Grand Mercure Bangalore

DARK CHOCOLATE RASPBERRY TART

INGREDIENTS
- 1 tart shell (baked)
- 250 g dark chocolate
- 200 ml cream
- 50 g butter
- Fresh raspberries

METHOD
- Heat cream and pour over chopped chocolate; whisk.
- Add butter for shine.
- Pour into tart shell.
- Chill until set and top with raspberries.

by Chef Raju Dorjee, Chef de Cuisine at JW Marriott Bengaluru

PYAAR KI TIKKI

INGREDIENTS
- Beetroot – 2 medium, boiled & grated
- Potato – 1 medium, boiled & mashed
- Cheese – ½ cup (mozzarella or processed), grated
- Breadcrumbs – 3–4 tbsp
- Green chili – 1, finely chopped
- Ginger – ½ tsp, grated
- Coriander leaves – 1 tbsp, chopped
- Garam masala – ½ tsp
- Black pepper – ¼ tsp

METHOD
- Prepare the mix: Squeeze excess water from grated beetroot.

- In a bowl, combine beetroot, mashed potato, cheese, breadcrumbs, chili, ginger, spices, salt, and corn
- flour. Mix well.
- Shape: Divide into equal portions and shape into small heart-shaped or round tikkis.
- Cook: Shallow fry on medium heat till crisp and golden on both sides.
- Serve hot with mint mayo, beetroot hummus, or chili aioli.

by Meghana Kamat, Junior Sous Chef, Bengaluru Marriott Hotel Whitefield

ROSE PETITE'

INGREDIENTS
- White chocolate: - 500gm
- Fresh cream: - 500gm
- Whip cream: - 1kg
- Gelatin: - 70gm

Filling:
- Rose syrup: - 200gm
- Water: - 100gm
- Breakfast sugar: - 90gm
- Egg :110gm
- Egg yolk: - 90gm
- Gelatin: - 12gm

METHOD
- Take a pan boil rose syrup, breakfast sugar and water to 130c
- Other side beat egg and egg yolk mix it well and put slowly to above mixture and cook it for 1min.
- Put gelatin and keep in deep to set.
- Mean while break chocolate into small pieces in a bowl
- Take pan boil fresh cream and put directly on chocolate and wrap it to get chocolate melt completely.
- Fold whip cream in above mixture nicely and then add gelatin to mixture
- Take a heart shape mold put half mixture then put filling as per mold shape then again fill with mixture to full.
- Spray with cocoa butter and red color
- Garnish with pink or red chocolate garnish.

by Chef Shitiz Lamba, Pastry Chef at The Radisson Blu Bengaluru, Outer Ring Road

WAITING FOR THE RIGHT ONE

Wedding on the cards, but at her own terms, says Mrunal, shutting down rumours

Dacoit' actress Mrunal Thakur has revealed that marriage is definitely part of her future plans but only on her own terms. In a recent interaction with PTI, the 'Sita Ramam' actor shared that while a wedding is "on the cards", she is still waiting for the right person to walk into her life. Her statement comes just days after she dismissed rumours linking her to 'Idli Kadai' actor Dhanush.

When asked about ongoing speculation surrounding her personal life, the 'Do Deewane Seher Mein' actress made it clear that she does intend to get married someday.

"Yes, wedding is on the cards and whenever the right day, the right time and the right person walks into my life, I will be the first one to announce it on my social networking sites," Thakur said.

Mrunal Thakur further reflected on how perspectives around marriage have evolved over time. According to her, today's generation prioritises genuine emotional connection over societal expectations.

"...Like, earlier, people might have had certain reasons to get married, but today, people marry because they want to, and they want to do it with the right person," she added.

Recently, reports claimed that Mrunal had been secretly dating Dhanush and that the two were planning to tie the knot on February 14, Valentine's Day. The rumours gained traction across social media platforms.

However, in an interview with Galatta Plus, when she was asked if she was getting married soon — indirectly hinting at Dhanush — Mrunal firmly denied the claims. "Me? No. I think 14th April is going to be the 1st April... 14th Feb is going to be the 1st April. April Fools' Day. Because I don't know who started... First of all, I've been quoted, but I never said anything. And they just said, Mrunal said so. I was like, wow, how beautiful. It's scary," she said.

—ETimes

V-Day prank

Vijay Varma created a huge stir on the internet with his Valentine's day story. People thought he's now in a new relationship after break up with Tamannaah Bhatia. But no, here's the twist in the tale.

On February 14, Vijay uploaded an Instagram story that instantly grabbed attention. The photo featured him holding a woman's hand, though her face was deliberately kept out of the frame. He added a caption that fueled speculation. He wrote, "Happy Valentine's Day to my forever," followed by a red heart and rainbow emoji.

To make matters more intriguing, he tagged an Instagram handle, @khushi_ahuja, sending fans into full investigative mode.

Social media was quick to react, with many assuming the actor had quietly moved on and was ready to go public with a new romance. But the mystery unraveled just as quickly as it began. A deeper dive into the tagged account revealed that it wasn't a genuine personal profile at all. Instead, it appeared to be a randomly created account, seemingly part of an elaborate joke. One of its posts even cheekily declared that it had fooled everyone, making it clear that the Valentine's Day tease was nothing more than a prank.

—ETimes

A meaningful journey with gratitude and love

This is Arjun Sarja's third film as a director. Arjun Sarja also plays a pivotal character in the film and is supporting it too. He has given importance to human values, bonding, gratitude, compassion not only towards people in need but also towards animals, and importance of adjustment and mutual respect to lead a happy family life.

Cinematographer G Balamurugan has done an excellent job behind the camera. Music director Anup Rubens has scored lilting music. He has succeeded in ensuring a background score to complement the emotional and romantic scenes.

Arjun Sarja has also succeeded in selecting an apt cast. Prakash Raj, as a village elder, who gives importance to peace rather than false ego and violence, has acted well. He has essayed the role with ease and comfort. Sathyaraj, known for playing grandfather roles in Telugu movies, plays a role as an affectionate father, who leaves no stone unturned to ensure his daughter is happy. The emotional scenes between Sathyaraj and Aishwarya Arjun are touching.

SEETHA PAYANA
3.0 RATING ★★★☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Arjun Sarja
- **ACTORS** Niranjan Sudhindra, Aishwarya Arjun, Prakash Raj, Sathyaraj, Kovai Sarala
- **CERTIFICATION** U
- **Duration** 115 minutes

The movie is about Seetha (Aishwarya Arjun), an aspiring chef, who wants to attend a cooking class organised by a well-known chef in Belagavi. On the way, Abhishek aka Abhi (Niranjan Sudhindra) requests her to drop him at his hometown on the way to Belagavi. After dropping Abhi on the way, Seetha reaches Belagavi and enters the hotel premises. A fire mishap takes place at the hotel but Seetha narrowly escapes. She sets out to thank all whom she met on the way to Belagavi because she considers that her meetings with them delayed her entering the hotel thus escaping from the fire mishap. She visits Abhi's native Seethapura and thanks him. On the way to Bengaluru, they rescue cows that are being transported to a slaughterhouse, save a girl from kidnappers, and counsel a couple to lead a happy married life. You have to watch the movie to know what happens to Seetha and Abhi.

Niranjan Sudhindra and Aishwarya Arjun are equally good. Arjun Sarja is good in action scenes. Their on-screen chemistry is very good. Sathyaraj, Prakash Raj, Kovai Sarala, and Posani provided good support. Dhruva Sarja's special appearance adds value to the movie.

It is worth a watch for family audiences.

—Y Maheswara Reddy

Nicole Kidman celebrates 'Galentine's Day'

Valentine's Day is all about celebrating love, and there's no rule that says only couples can celebrate it. If you're single, go ahead and pamper yourself! Actress Nicole Kidman's latest Instagram Story is the perfect inspiration for doing just that.

The Oscar-winning actress shared a picture of her pictured relaxing in a bed. She could be seen sporting a pink and white pinstriped shirt. She gathered a plush white comforter around her legs as a beam of sunlight illuminated her face, which appeared serene and relaxed.

"Happy Galentines," she captioned the post.

The Galentine's Day post comes a month after Kidman, 58, finalised her divorce from Keith Urban, also 58, after 19 years of marriage, as per Page Six.

The former power couple, parents to daughters Sunday Rose, 17, and Faith Margaret, 15, went their separate ways over the last summer.

—ANI

Director Joe Simon no more

Veteran Kannada filmmaker Joe Simon is no more. Joe Simon breathed his last on February 13. He passed away following a sudden cardiac arrest.

Joe Simon felt uneasiness during an executive committee gathering at the Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce. He was immediately taken to Mallige Hospital, but sadly, he could not be saved.

After learning about his demise, Deputy Chief Minister DK Shivakumar paid his condolences. In a post on X, Shivakumar described Simon's death as an "irreparable loss" to the Kannada film industry. "The demise of Joe Simon, the renowned director and comedian of Kannada cinema, is a deeply saddening event..." his post read.

—ANI

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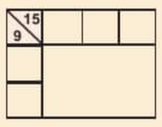
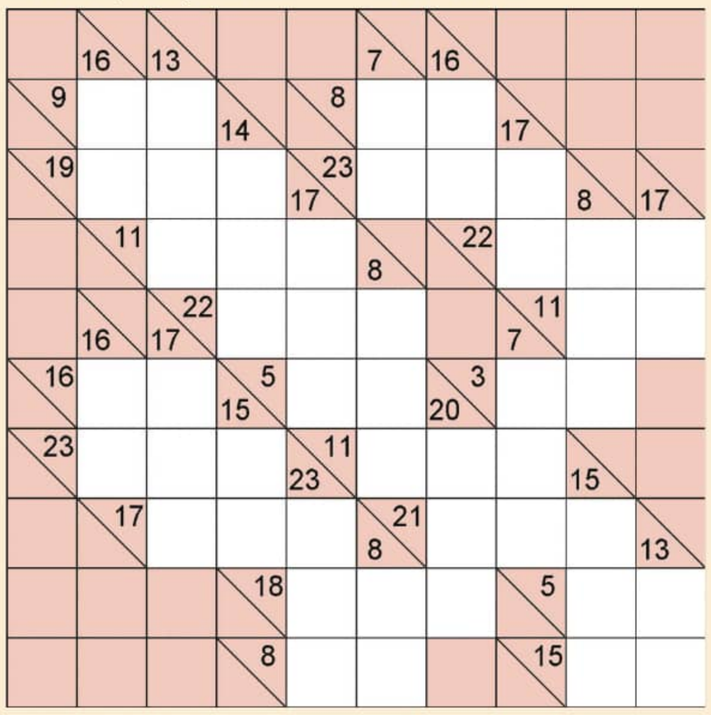
@BangaloreMirror

Kakuro

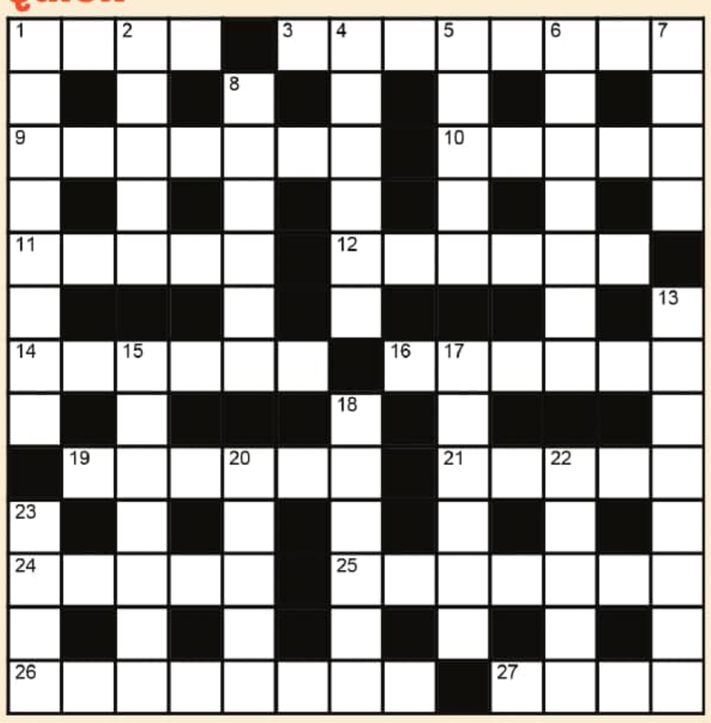
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

1 Deep mud (4)
3 Trade or business (8)
9 Soldier in British history (7)
10 The idiot box (2,3)
11 Hurts; injures (5)
12 Wears away (6)
14 Legally seize (6)
16 Sanctuary (6)
19 National song (6)
21 Abolish (5)
24 Carried on war etc.? (5)
25 Holy threesome (7)
26 Home base of Gilbertian pirates (8)
27 ____ to be : was ? (4)

DOWN

1 Methane variant (5-3)
2 ___ cup: Golf trophy (5)
4 Retail store (6)
5 Underground rail system (5)
6 ___ Market: Market In Shivajinagar (7)
7 You too in Latin (2,2)
8 Profits? No, just the opposite (6)
13 Having a job (8)
15 X-rays discoverer (7)
17 Motionless (6)
18 Causing vomiting (6)
20 Water snake in Greek mythology (5)
22 Fasteners (5)
23 Interchange (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: F EQUALS H

FK XFN HQATSH WZY SKT-KLUQQV QNHKH SLNZTY.

Linemaro

If you hold 12 roses and stand in front of a mirror, you will see 13 of the most beautiful things in the world

Mindchow

He who opens a school closes a prison

Joke of the day

Diplomacy: The art of letting somebody else have your way

Loop

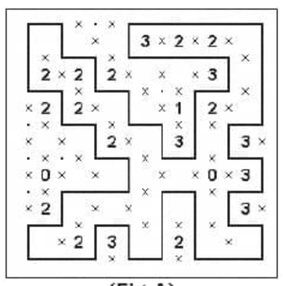
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

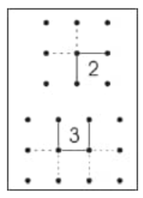
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

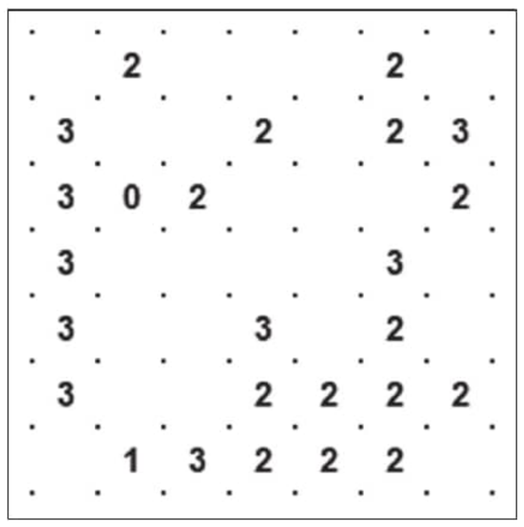
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



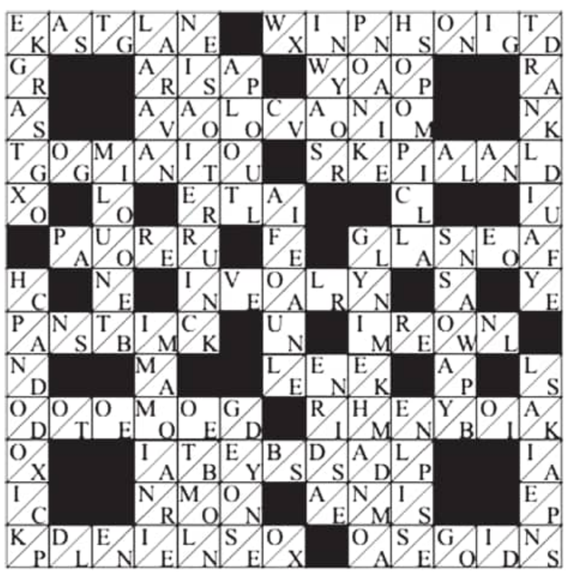
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



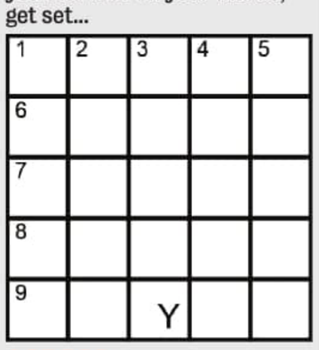
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

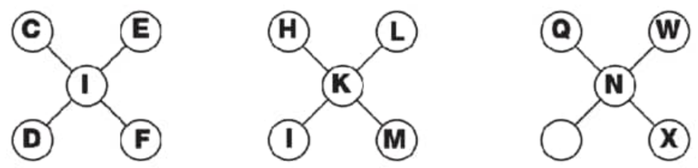
1 Of Lao; 6 So old;
7 Sue DD; 8 Uglis;
9 My Che

DOWN

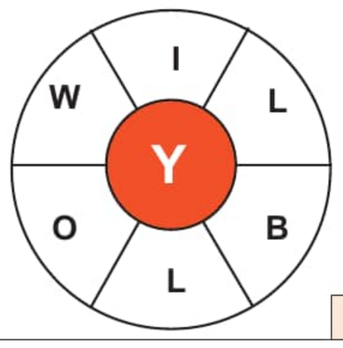
1 Acids; 2 Ghoul;
3 Dolly; 4 Due mo;
5 Foes S

Mensapuzzle

Which letter replaces the blank and completes the sequence?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; **05** Good; **06** Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

	3	1			8			
5								8
	4	2		5				7
		8		1			9	
1		4	7		2	3		5
	6			4		2		
2				8		7	5	
6								9
			9			1	2	

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 18

4 4 9 9

Medium = 5

2 3 8 8

Hard = 27

2 5 9 4

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.

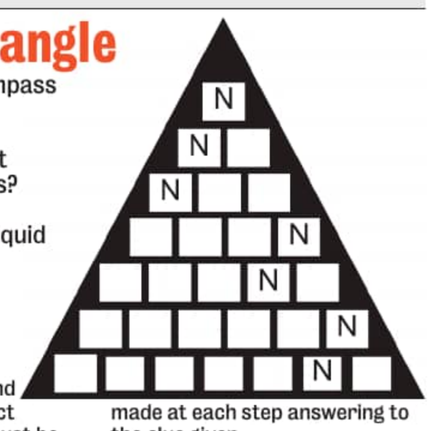
Differences: 1. Mouth is different. 2. Hat is smaller. 3. Bow tie is larger. 4. Coffeepot is smaller. 5. Window is not as wide. 6. Napkin dispenser is smaller.

Riddler

Can you figure out these two commonly used phrases that have been expressed in a wordy way? 1. To accumulate an excess of temperature beneath a circular, tight-fitting clothing component. 2. Emanating from a culinary vessel into a site of pyrogenic activity.

Alpha triangle

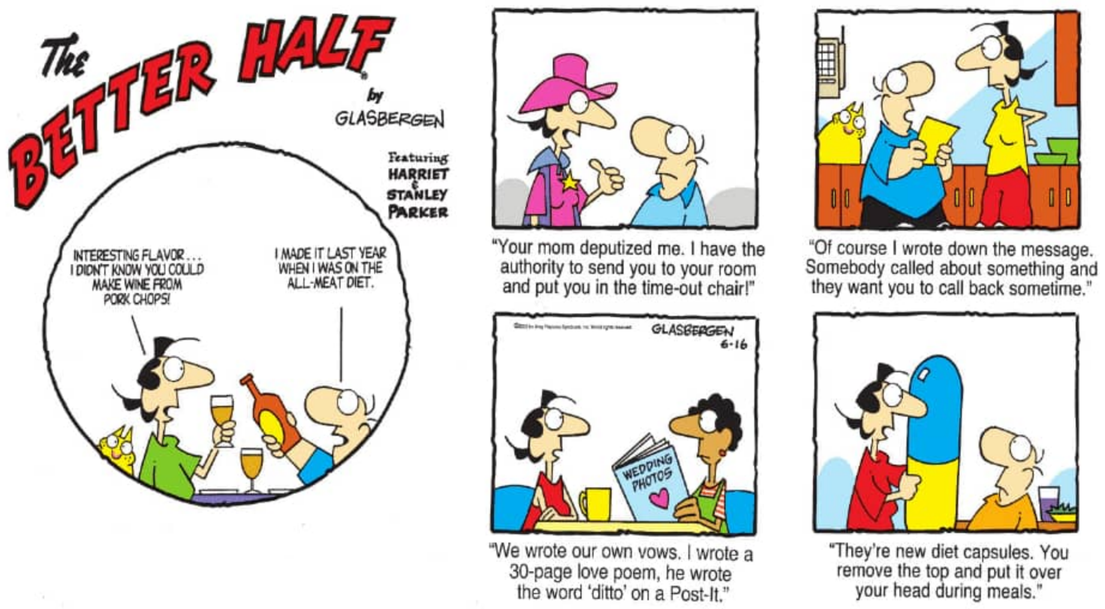
1 North on the compass
2 Opposite of yes
3 Eggy beverage
4 Dramatic conflict
5 Pananji residents?
6 Watchword
7 Old measure of liquid



Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
INTERESTING FLAVOR... I DIDN'T KNOW YOU COULD MAKE WINE FROM PORK CHOPS!
I MADE IT LAST YEAR WHEN I WAS ON THE ALL-MEAT DIET.
"Your mom deputized me. I have the authority to send you to your room and put you in the time-out chair!"
"Of course I wrote down the message. Somebody called about something and they want you to call back sometime."
GLASBERGEN 6-16
WEDDING PHOTOS
"We wrote our own vows. I wrote a 30-page love poem, he wrote the word 'ditto' on a Post-It."
"They're new diet capsules. You remove the top and put it over your head during meals."

BABY BLUES
BY RICK KIRKMAN & JERRY SCOTT
ARE YOU READY?
FOR WHAT?
DINNER AT THE MARTINS'!
IS THAT TODAY?
YES! REMEMBER WHEN YOU TOLD ME THAT WE SHOULD GET TOGETHER WITH THEM SOON?
OH. YEAH.
SO, I MADE THE ARRANGEMENTS, FOUND A SITTER, ORDERED A PIZZA FOR THE KIDS, BOUGHT THIS NEW SKIRT, WASHED MY HAIR, MADE A CHEESECAKE, AND PICKED OUT A NICE BOTTLE OF WINE.
ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS PUT ON YOUR SHOES!
BOTH OF THEM?
FLASH GORDON
YEARS AGO, I REALIZED THE EARTH WAS DOOMED -- AND BELIEVED I ALONE COULD AVERT IT.
IN MY MANIA, I DRAGGED TWO YOUNG PEOPLE INTO MY SUICIDE MISSION TO ANOTHER PLANET.
BUT DALE AND FLASH -- THEIR BRAVERY HAS SAVED OUR WORLD, NOW GALAXIES AWAY.
AND UNTIL MY FINAL SYNAPSE DARKENS AND DIES, I WILL DO ALL I CAN TO PROTECT THEM.
I AM DR. HANS ZARKOV, SHE'S DALE ARDEN, AND OUR FRIEND FLASH ROTS IN PRISON FOR A MURDER HE DIDN'T COMMIT--
UNLESS WE CAN PROVE HIS INNOCENCE.
WE BELIEVE AZURA, WITCH-QUEEN OF THE CAVERNS OF KIRA, IS SOMEHOW RESPONSIBLE.
THE PALACE DRONE FOOTAGE LEADING UP TO THE CRIME GIVES US NOTHING WE CAN USE...
...SO, WITH MY LEG STILL BROKEN, IT FALLS TO DALE TO INFILTRATE THE KIRAN AMBASSADORIAL SUITE IN SEARCH OF EVIDENCE.
SHE DONS FLASH'S SHIELD SHIRT AS I MODIFY THE DRONE TO LET ME SEE WHAT SHE SEES.
INSIDE THE SUITE, SHE FINDS GENERAL KAHL TORTURING SOMEONE ON AN AGONY WHEEL...
...WHILE IN KAHL'S QUARTERS, SHE SPIES A MYSTERIOUS MACHINE.
SHE LINGERS SO I CAN TRY TO IDENTIFY IT...
...WHEN SUDDENLY, THE WITCH-QUEEN STRIKES.
AND ALL I CAN DO IS WATCH.
NEXT: BLUE AND BLACK

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Your year ahead is characterized by resilience and professional triumph. Career challenges are met with innovative solutions and leadership. Love is a source of strength, especially during challenging transitions. Domestic life remains stable, providing a comforting retreat from work stress. Travel for soul-searching brings clarity to your path. Financial growth is steady, supported by your practical and disciplined approach.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Expect significant developments at work today as you build a robust team. Giving your spouse extra attention and focusing on gains ensures a day filled with diverse, positive emotional experiences.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Resolve any lingering frustrations by confiding in a trusted friend today. Strengthening your family bonds and exploring creative endeavours or higher education will bring you a wonderful sense of fulfilment.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Experience smooth work proceedings today as you earn great respect from your colleagues. Strengthening your family bonds and focusing on your studies will lead to a very productive, successful day.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Explore exciting new ideas to boost your future income today. Developing a fresh interest in sports increases your vitality, while prioritising your children's health ensures a happy and balanced home.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Navigate your workday successfully with support from your subordinates. A pleasant surprise from your partner brings joy, while resolving education matters and expecting financial gains makes for a fantastic day.

Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Address important family matters with grace today. By delegating work to manage your stress, you will find effective solutions and maintain a sense of harmony within your household and office.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Maintain a positive mind-set to resolve any work issues today. By practicing patience and avoiding over thinking, you will navigate your finances wisely and find clarity in all your personal matters.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Leverage your strong network to launch successful business plans today. Resolving family health issues and practicing yoga will ensure you attract positive connections while maintaining your physical and mental well-being.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Use your excellent organisational skills to revamp your office space today. Strengthening the connection with your partner and resolving family health issues will lead to a very productive, happy day.

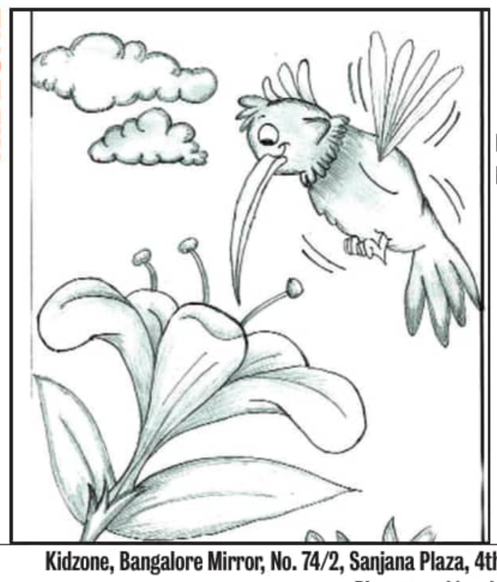
Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Experience deep mental peace and harmony at home today. Addressing communication issues in your relationships and using creative approaches for business growth will lead to a very successful, happy day.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Enjoy a very positive day in business with new clients and job opportunities. Singles may find a compatible match today. Focus on your career growth to ensure long-term financial prosperity.

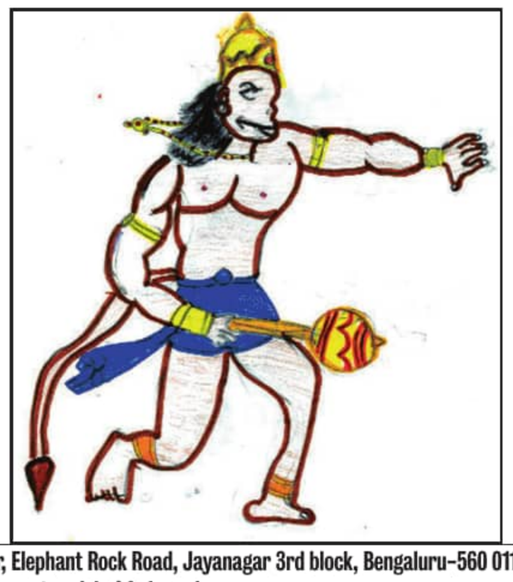
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Expect a successful business day with the introduction of a new partner. Short travels for family celebrations bring joy, while focusing on spiritual self-discovery through meditation provides beautiful inner peace.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Denisha, Bengaluru



Amog, Bengaluru

Kidzone, Bangalore Mirror, No. 74/2, Sanjana Plaza, 4th & 5th Floor, Elephant Rock Road, Jayanagar 3rd block, Bengaluru-560 011;
Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M

√{79i·(1+80+80·81) / [79i·(1+80)]}=
√{(81+80·81) / 81}=
√{1+80} = 9

RIDDLER

1. Get hot under the collar. & 2. Out of the frying pan and into the fire.

BULL'S EYE

BILLOWY, blowy, lily, lowly, oily, wily

FAST FIVE

A	L	O	O	F
S	O	L	D	O
D	U	D	E	S
I	G	L	U	S
C	H	Y	M	E

STRIKE OUT

E	A	G	L	E	■	X	I	P	H	O	I	D	■	■
R	■	A	S	P	■	Y	A	O	■	■	■	A	■	■
A	■	V	O	L	C	A	N	O	■	■	■	N	■	■
T	O	M	A	T	O	■	R	E	P	A	N	D	■	■
O	■	O	■	E	T	A	■	L	■	■	■	I	■	■
P	U	R	R	■	F	■	G	A	N	E	F	■	■	■
H	■	N	■	I	■	V	O	R	Y	■	A	■	■	Y
A	N	T	I	C	■	U	■	M	E	W	L	E	■	L
D	■	■	■	M	■	■	L	E	K	■	A	■	S	■
D	O	O	M	E	D	■	R	H	E	B	O	K	■	■
C	■	N	O	N	■	E	N	S	■	A	L	■	■	I
O	■	A	B	Y	S	S	A	L	■	■	■	I	■	■
K	L	E	E	N	E	X	■	A	E	G	I	S	■	■

QUICK

M	I	R	E	■	C	O	M	M	E	R	C	E	■	■
A	■	Y	■	L	■	U	■	E	■	U	■	T	■	■
R	E	D	C	O	A	T	■	T	V	S	E	T	■	■
S	■	E	■	S	■	L	■	R	■	S	■	U	■	■
H	A	R	M	S	■	E	R	O	D	E	S	■	■	■
G	■	■	■	E	■	T	■	■	■	L	■	E	■	■
A	R	R	E	S	T	■	A	S	Y	L	U	M	■	■
S	■	O	■	E	■	T	■	A	N	N	U	L	■	P
A	N	T	H	E	M	■	T	■	A	N	O	■	■	■
W	A	G	E	D	■	T	R	I	N	I	T	Y	■	■
A	■	E	■	R	■	I	■	C	■	L	■	E	■	■
P	E	N	Z	A	N	C	E	■	U	S	E	D	■	■

MENSA PUZZLE

R. Taking rows across each group letters increase by 2, 3, 4, 5 and then 6.

QUOTE UNCODE

He who slings mud generally loses ground.

SUDOKU

9	3	1	4	7	8	5	6	2
5	7	6	2	9	1	4	3	8
8	4	2	3	5	6	9	1	7
7	2	8	5	1	3	6	9	4
3	6	5	8	4	9	2	7	1
1	9	4	7	6	2	3	8	5
2	1	9	6	8	4	7	5	3
6	5	3	1	2	7	8	4	9
4	8	7	9	3	5	1	2	6

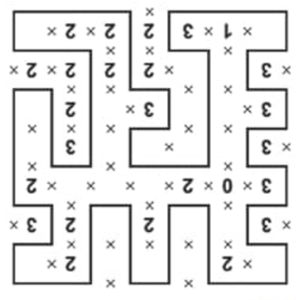
ALPHA TRIANGLE

N, No, Nog, Agon, Goans, Slogan, Gallons.

GO FIGURE

Easy
4 + 9 – 4 + 9 = 18
Medium
3 x 8 / 8 + 2 = 5
Hard
4 x 5 – 2 + 9 = 27

LOOP



KAKURO

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POORVIKA

Poorvika's

MEGA EXCHANGE MELA

THINK MOBILE..!

THINK POORVIKA..!

iPhone 17 (256 GB)

Instant Cashback ₹ 4,000*

Exchange Bonus ₹ 6,000*

FREE Power Adapter 20W Worth ₹ 2,190

SAMSUNG Galaxy A36 5G

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OR

18* Month No Cost EMI

oppo Reno 15 C 5G

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OR

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EMI @ ₹2,916*

Upto 70% Discount TWS Worth ₹ 4,999

Redmi Note 15 Pro 5G

Upto ₹3,000* Instant Cashback

OR

0 DOWN PAYMENT

EMI @ ₹3,200*

Upto 80% Discount Neckband Worth ₹ 2,999

realme 16 Pro 5G

Upto ₹3,000* Instant Cashback

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